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LETTER DATED 7 SEPTEMBER 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that on 6 August 1997 United States naval forces on station in the Arabian Gulf intercepted the Cambodian freighter Kwang Mayong inside Iraqi territorial waters. The vessel was loaded with packaged laundry detergent being imported by Iraq under the terms of the memorandum of understanding between Iraq and the United Nations. It was searched by these forces in a coercive manner, and part of the cargo was removed to the gangways, cabins and deck. A large part of the cargo was lost as a result of this handling and through exposure to moisture and sea water. This presented a health hazard to the workers who unloaded the cargo when they were exposed to this chemical substance, and the process of unloading was thus impeded.

I request your intervention with the United States of America with a view to inducing it to desist from acts of provocation that violate the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the provisions of the memorandum of understanding, inasmuch as they constitute a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of a State Member of the United Nations and tend to create a state of tension and instability in the region for no good reason. In accordance with the principle of State responsibility, I also affirm the legally established right of the Republic of Iraq to seek compensation for all the damage caused to it by this action.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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